

# Appendix B

## Grand Teton

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton National Park  
John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Pkwy



### Grand Teton National Park

#### Primary Interpretive Themes

1. **The Teton Range dramatically illustrates all the processes of fault block mountain building.**

Though fault block mountains are not unusual, what is unusual about this range is its accessibility – you can see the whole thing in one vast sweep – its close association with an intricate fault and active fault system, its steep east face accentuated by the manner in which the valley and mountain blocks have moved in opposition and its elegantly sculpted mix of valleys and peaks. The proximity of the Range to the Yellowstone caldera and hotspot as well as its location along the Snake River Plain offer glimpses at the earth's fundamental forces.

2. **Humans have responded and adapted to the resources and environment of Jackson Hole in many different ways for 12,000 years.**

The story is a episodic one of adaptations and failures to adapt. The harsh winters dictated that primitive peoples' occupations would be seasonal. Farmers and ranchers found the environment unsuitable to year-round subsistence and some adapted by accommodating seasonal occupants. This theme might be called "Twelve Thousand Years of Summer Homes."

3. **Grand Teton, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway and Yellowstone comprise the heart of the largest, most intact ecosystem remaining in the temperate zone of the world.**

Remnants of primitive natural America can be found in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, and the totality accommodates a genetic reservoir for preservation of endangered species.

The formation of the park was a battle between private economic interests and emerging conservation thought in the early 20th century. Recognition of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem carries the controversy to a larger context. Grand Teton cannot exist as an island unaffected by local, regional, national, and ever global environmental changes.

4. **Glaciers and other erosive forces created the dramatic scenery of the Teton Range and Jackson Hole.**

At least two distinct glacial periods were the dominant forces in creating the scene much as it is today, leaving the piedmont lakes as prominent features. The resulting physical setting determined in a large part the systems of plants and animals that evolved with the landscape of the Teton Range. All these natural forces are ongoing, and changes can occur over thousands of years or overnight.

5. **The awesome grandeur of the Teton Range adds a greater dimension to resource compatible recreation uses.**

The invigorating physical interaction with this recreational setting, combined with aesthetic response, engenders a greater appreciation for the environment. Parks preserve opportunities for personal challenge in an untamed environment.

6. **Grand Teton provides a diversity of habitats for a variety of plant and animal species that interact as a unit rather than as individuals.**

The original impetus for preservation of the valley was to maintain the elk herd as part of the foreground scene. Subsequent scientific inquiry revealed the necessity for preserving the ecosystem as a whole.

7. **A number of hazards exist in a natural area such as Grand Teton.**

Full appreciation of a natural environment requires dealing with it, in varying degrees, on its own terms. This ranges from judicious attention to hazards different from, but not necessarily more dangerous than, those encountered in an urban setting, to special instruction and equipment needed for backcountry use.

8. **Visitors bear responsibility for as well as ownership of public lands such as Grand Teton, and must strive for and support balanced resource preservation and use.**

Ownership of Grand Teton, and stewardship of resources, is in the hands of the people. The role of the National Park Service is to balance resource protection with the recreational desires of the various park owners.

9. **The Native American presence, from initial arrivals 12,000 years ago to as close to the present as possible.**

The American Indians' prehistoric to contemporary multiple uses, survival strategies, connections to other regions, spiritual and religious traditions, and continuing adaptations in Jackson Hole and the Teton Range..

10. **The dynamic period of park establishment paralleled a similarly dynamic period of settlement, as well as a period of growing local and national interest in conservation.**

Grand Teton, while obviously a scenic, western, natural area incorporates legislated uses that are inconsistent with any other western natural area and give the park the complexion of a traditional recreation area – hunting, grazing, inholdings, a commercial airport, access and rights of way and cattle trailing and other concerns provide complexities not found elsewhere. These uses contrast with the preservation and protection mandates of the service and provide abundant material for discussion.

- A. **Fur trade and exploration and the first Euro-Americans contact and first presentations of the area to Euro-Americans.**
- B. **Homesteading and ranching and the first attempts by Euro-Americans to live in the area year-round and the expanding reach of outside economic interests.** The difficulties of living in the area and the frustrated, and thereby particularly illuminating, attempts to apply the agrarian dream to this part of the West.
- C. **Formation of the park and the variety of early visions and the range of people holding those visions for ultimately creating Grand Teton National Park.** The conflict between preservationist interests and local citizens associated with earlier notions of what this area should become. The establishment of the park and confrontation between the national interests and individual rights or freedom were often subjected to what conservationists perceived as the national interest.